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THE NATION

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The Silent Service

(See Cover)

What enables the wise sovereign and the good general to strike and conquer, and achieve things beyond the reach of ordinary men, is foreknowledge.

—Sun Tzu, 6th Century B.C.
Chinese military theorist

Inside a U.S. ferret satellite flashing around the earth at 17,000 m.p.h., supersensitive instruments intercept and flick back to Virginia a radio message between Moscow and a Soviet submarine in the Pacific. In Laos, an American listens attentively to the words of a cocktail waiter, then slips him a bar of silver. In an office of the U.S. embassy in Bonn, a rotund Sovietologist digests a stack of reports that may originate from any one of a thousand sources—a barber in East Berlin, a whorehouse madam in Vienna, a U.S. electronics salesman in Darmstadt, an Eastern European propaganda broadside. At an airfield on Taiwan, a black U-2 reconnaissance plane with a Nationalist Chinese pilot at the controls soars off the runway, bound for skies 15 miles above Red China on a photographic mission.

Such is the spider-web scope and space-age sophistication of the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, the nation's deep-secret seeker of foreknowledge in the dim, cold demi-world of international intelligence. CIA is America's chief combatant in what Secretary of State Dean Rusk calls "a tough struggle going on in the back alleys all over the world, a never-ending war, and there's no quarter asked and none given."

Cacophony of Protest. So cloaked and gagged is CIA's operation that a majority of Americans cannot recite even its most dramatic feats: its pinpoint reporting about day-by-day developments leading to the explosion of Red China's first nuclear device, its brilliant success in wiretapping Soviet army headquarters in East Berlin,* its nick-of-time revelation in 1962 that Russian missile bases were abuilding in Cuba. Even more mysterious to most Americans than CIA itself is its director, Richard McGarrah Helms, 53, an intense, con-

trolled, self-effacing professional who holds one of the most delicate and crucial posts in official Washington—and whose name has yet to appear in *Who's Who in America*. Dick Helms has been, in Washington parlance, a "spook" for nearly 25 years. He is a veteran of some of the agency's most labyrinthine operations—from masterminding double

the emotionalism of young Americans who worship honesty. It aroused the outrage of many in the academic community who—mistakenly—regard CIA as an evil manipulator of foreign policy. And the furor showed again how readily Americans, who, while seldom acknowledging the quiet and generally successful performance of their intelligence com-



STUDENTS ARRIVING FOR WORLD YOUTH FESTIVAL IN MOSCOW (1957)

Once again, a spotlight on the tightrope of paradoxes.

agents working at the very heart of Kremlin intelligence to supervising covert U.S. operations that kept the Congo out of Communist control.

Yet no amount of expertise in back-alley battling or electronic espionage could have prepared Helms or CIA for the cacophony of protest that arose last week over yet another facet of U.S. intelligence—the agency's undercover funding of American and international students' associations.

The controversy once again spotlighted the shadowy tightrope of paradoxes that the Helmsmen must walk in the interests of a nation that cherishes openness and fair play. The debate pitted the Puritan ethic against the pragmatism of cold-war survival. It matched the conspiratorial methods necessarily

community, will howl their indignation at the first hint of misjudgment.

"Sinister Specter." The story—and the storm—broke early in the week when *Ramparts*, the sensation-seeking New Left-leaning monthly, took full-page newspaper ads to trumpet an article scheduled for its March issue that would "document" how CIA "infiltrated and subverted the world of American student leaders." The story, according to *Ramparts*, was a "case study in the corruption of youthful idealism," and would prove that "CIA owes the youth of this country an apology." CIA's involvement with the academic community has been a target of *Ramparts* before: an article last April lambasted Michigan State University for providing cover for five CIA agents during a federal training project to train South

* Accomplished by digging and wiring a tunnel from West to East Berlin, which caved in only because East German street laborers inadvertently hit a weak spot while working on a routine job in 1956.